

City of
Bloomington
Illinois

Before and After
the Great Fire
of June 19 • 1900

Issued by the
Pantagraph Printing and Stationery Co.
Bloomington, Illinois



Historical Sketch.



McLEAN COUNTY COURT HOUSE.

So badly burned that it will be necessary to spend \$100,000 to make it as good as new.

shall be no more. Within the brief space of eight hours, a fire, which burned from the birth of June 19, 1900, until conquered by a battery of departments from Springfield, Peoria, and the Evergreen City, destroyed over two millions of property and cost one death, a youth of 17, named Robert Schmitt, expiring from the concussion of a dynamite used in blowing up buildings in the path of the devastation was the most ever visited a city of United States, and as the most remarkable extent of loss and considered.

fire will, perhaps, be mystery. The flames in the Model Laundry, ing located at 113 East alarm was turned in at had been in progress In an incredibly structure adjoining, of by the B. S. Green was ablaze. The gale steadily during the entire night, carried the flames west, and in an hour Main, Monroe, and Jefferson streets, with the exception of the fireproof government building, saved by herculean efforts, was in ruins.

Carried onward irresistibly by their own mad power and the howling fury of the wind, the mountains of flame rolled across the streets to the south and west and enveloped in a great sinister blanket of yellow the handsome buildings that were Bloomington's pride. The six story Griesheim structure, the Cole Bros.' dry goods emporium and all other brick structures on the east side of the Court House, were quickly licked up at the same time the block on the north side of the square, containing the imposing buildings of four and five stories, including the Kamm, Higgs, and Smith dry goods firms and the Phoenix Hotel, were soon transformed into smoldering debris.

Midway between this hell of flame, in the vortex of destruction, stood the peerless Court House, the pride of all McLean County. A tiny, yellow imp, pionetting along the cornering, was the first intimation of

TRADITION, carried to us from pioneer days on the wings of memory, tells that the early settlers, after erecting the first log cabin on the site of what is now the City of Bloomington, baptized the humble structure with water drawn from a spring that bubbled from the virgin soil, moved by an impulse that was half solemn, half humorous. Seventy years later, Bloomington, after becoming one of the fairest of western cities, famed in the halls of statesmanship, of education, art, and music, has been baptized again. But alas, the second baptism was of fire, of destruction, and of death. By a remarkable coincidence, the second baptism was administered upon the fiftieth anniversary of the city's incorporation, and but a few short weeks after the notable celebration of this event. Certainly the half-century date will be indelibly stamped upon the memory of every inhabitant, and the disaster be not forgotten until time



Before the fire. Corner Main and Monroe Streets. Fire started in the Model Laundry, the building shown on left of picture.

ing element. This con-disastrous that has the middle class in the will forever be known able in history when brevity of duration is

The origin of the always shrouded in were first discovered a four-story brick build-Monroe Street. The 12:30 a.m., but the fire for some time previous. short time the brick the same size, occupied Wholesale Saddlery, of wind that prevailed the block bounded by



PANTAGRAPH BUILDING.

Home of the Pantagraph Printing & Stationery Co. Many thought this building would surely be destroyed, and it was saved only after a severe struggle.

danger. He was quickly joined by many of his fellows, and before a hand could be lifted to avert the calamity, the structure was doomed, thousands with tears in their eyes, watching the destruction of this noble pile, naught remaining but the skeleton frame and the dome, which like a skull, sightless and cavernous, still proudly surmounting the sea of ruins below.

Still insatiable, the devouring element swept west and swallowed up the mammoth Windsor Hotel, Ashley buildings, and old Baptist church. Its tentacles were entwined about the block west of the square, but here water triumphed over fire, and shuddering in impotent fury, the gluttoned fiend was throttled and subdued.

Volumes could be filled with incidents of the great fire and the story is voluminous enough to be continued *ad infinitum*. Although the fair city has received a blow that would forever maim, or else kill the ordinary municipality, Bloomington will rise Phoenix-like from her ashes, and will live again in greater glory than before. A detailed statement of the losses, amounting to over \$2,000,000, with insurance of one-half, is herewith subjoined:



GRISHAM BUILDING. Completely destroyed.

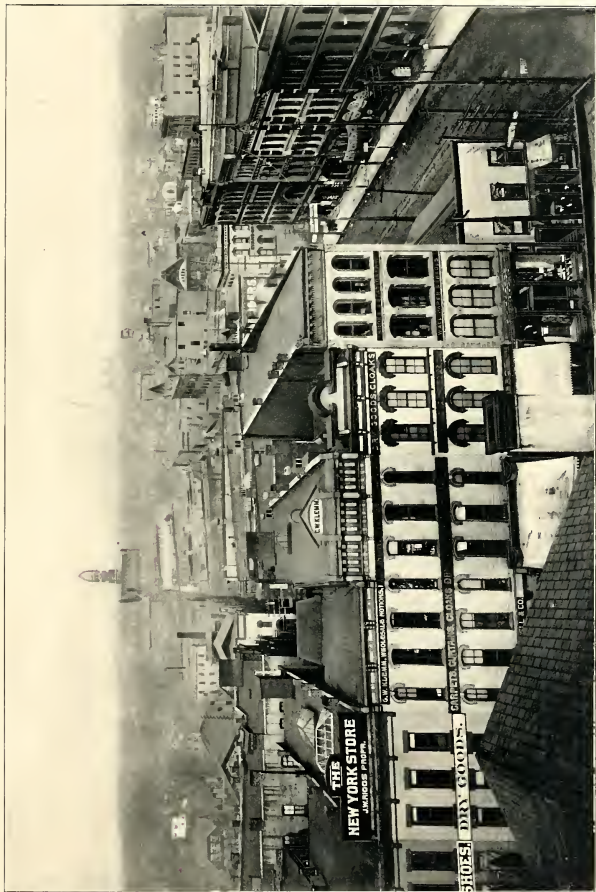


WINDSOR HOTEL. Completely destroyed.

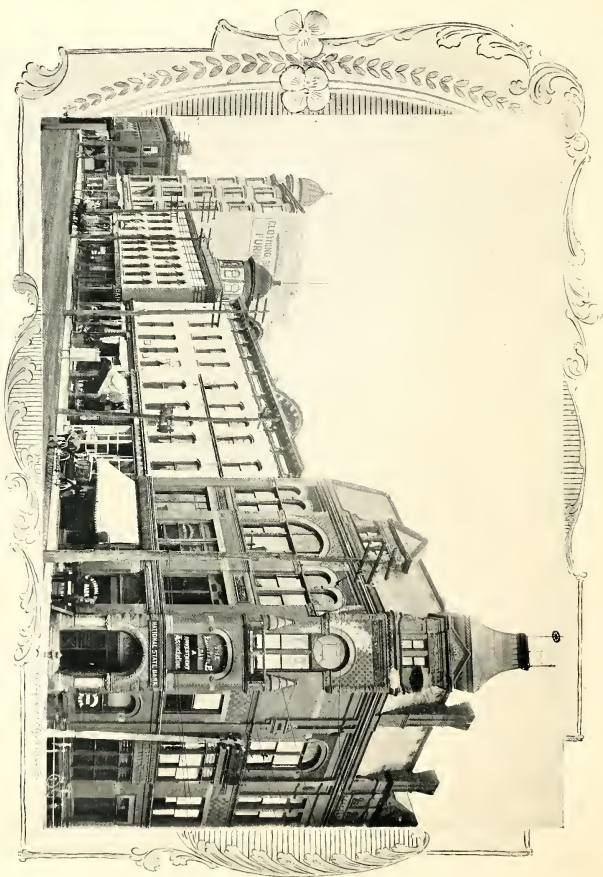
Ashton, Fred.....	\$ 500	Evaas, J. W. estate (bldg.)	\$ 20,000	Hays (heirs).....	\$ 1,000	Plumb, Belle (bldg).....	4,000
Armbruster & Lackey.....	500	Evaas, R. F. & W. L. Grand	2,000	Klemm, C. W. (bldg).....	25,000	Stock.....	4,000
Braley, Mrs. T. A. (Schaefer shoe building).....	16,000	Leaders bldg.....	12,000	Klopp, W. E.....	125,000	Pisley & Co.....	20,000
Braley, Mrs. T. A. (Green's drug store building).....	18,000	Laundry bldg.....	10,000	Klopp, W. E.....	10,000	Presbyterian church.....	100
Beckles, C. H.....	600	Evaas, R. F. (grocery).....	500	Kube, Bert.....	3,500	Pierce, Charles.....	40,000
Bishop, Dr.....	400	Essenberger, G. A.....	500	Kohler Bros.....	8,700	Riggs, J. W.....	15,000
Brock, E.....	1,000	Ewing, Wight & Ewing.....	3,000	Kreiman.....	6,500	Building occupied by T. Bethel.....	10,000
Harnes, Joseph (studio).....	1,500	Eagle block.....	35,000	Kitchell, A. M.....	4,600	Read, G. H. & Bros. stock.....	24,000
Boston Store bldg. (owned by Withers estate).....	13,000	P. H. Henry, Louis.....	800	Kunkler, Dr.....	500	Building.....	6,000
Becha, Tooy.....	3,000	First National bank bldg.....	800	Leederer, R.....	8,000	Roswell, Neville & Landry.....	2,500
Braber, Mr. (buildings).....	1,500	Freeman, Julius.....	200	Loan Equitable.....	2,000	Rogers, R. C. & Co.....	7,000
Bulles, W. P.....	7,000	Fulwiler, J. A.....	1,500	Laundry, Model.....	10,000	Stevenson, Harry.....	600
Brand, Geo. & Co (bldg).....	15,000	Funk, Wm.....	650	Lockett, Dr.....	300	Stipp, Mrs.....	8,000
Stock.....	18,000	Frederick, Grant.....	100	Livingston (heirs, bldg).....	35,000	Robinson, S. P.....	1,750
Bonnett, Dr.....	350	Fulwiler, Dr.....	1,800	Lillard & Williams.....	5,000	Share Law Library.....	1,500
Barry & Morrissey, Sample, Benjamin & Fifer.....	8,000	Fenelon, Dr.....	450	Law Library.....	10,000	Remm brande bldg & I O O F. building.....	30,000
Brokaw, A. (building).....	2,000	Finney, Ed.....	6,500	Little, Dr.....	2,000	Furnishings.....	5,000
Borst, J.....	2,000	Frevert, J. J. (building).....	10,000	Mason, Squire.....	1,500	Reed, Thomas.....	500
B. & R. T.....	100	Fry.....	1,000	Marion.....	1,500	Stephen Smith's Sons bldg.....	35,000
Court House.....	100,000	St. & Wyckoff.....	200	Miller, Z. T. & Sons.....	15,000	Stock.....	30,000
Cole Bros. (building).....	25,000	Free Polyclinic.....	2,000	Marriott, H. M.....	400	Stapleton, J. Dr.....	1,800
Stock.....	50,000	Griesheim, Wolf (bldg).....	85,000	Marsh, Dr.....	2,100	Smith, Drs Geo. & Lee.....	13,000
Chapin, Dr.....	900	Guthrie, A. M.....	7,000	Miller, Wm.....	500	Sans, F. A. (building).....	12,000
Campbell, Dr.....	1,000	Gardner, J. U.....	2,500	Merrick Mrs (bldg).....	8,000	Stock.....	7,000
Capea, Charles.....	1,500	Graham, Lyman (McLean County Coal bldg).....	18,000	Moore, Dr.....	2,000	Senecy.....	500
Commonwealth.....	1,000	Getty, S.....	4,500	Morsman, Dr.....	500	Sullivan, Frank.....	100
Chicago Record.....	100	Goldman, H. F.....	2,500	Myers, Dr.....	1,000	State National Bank.....	2,000
Cole, Charles J.....	500	Green, B. S. & Co. (bldg).....	25,000	Middle Division Elevator.....	300	Trowbridge, Fleming & Bohrer.....	3,000
Carlock, W. B. & Sons.....	2,000	Stock.....	75,000	O. & H. Throbro.....	300	Tunst, Judge & Son.....	15,000
Cordard, A. M.....	250	Green Drug Co.....	6,800	McNally, W. C. (bldg).....	3,500	Telephone, Home Co.....	7,000
Coblentz, J. C.....	12,000	Guthrie, A.....	500	Stock.....	3,500	Telephone, Central Union.....	11,000
Cooper, Jackman & Co.....	16,000	Gardner, W. H.....	600	Nieder, John.....	2,500	Thompson & Son, Co.....	10,000
Columbian Knights.....	400	Good Templars.....	400	Ozier & Co.....	1,500	Vandervort, F. C.....	600
Corn Belt Bank.....	2,500	Grabel, G. B.....	300	O'Connell & Miner.....	1,500	Viney & Story.....	400
Craigier, Dr. J. W.....	2,000	Heater & McGregor heirs.....	30,000	O. & E. C.....	2,500	Vinmont & Koehn.....	25,000
Cunningham, S. L. & Co.....	600	Hartley, Mrs.....	600	Otto, Robert G.....	500	Windsor Hotel (bldg).....	50,000
Coen, Dr.....	1,000	Haves, Thompson & Sweet.....	700	Orner, Dr.....	300	Widom, Lincoln (bldg).....	12,000
DeMolay Band.....	250	Hoffman, Jesse.....	600	O. & E. C.....	100	Wilcox Bros.....	75,000
Crescent Grain Co.....	250	Hull & Fox, Drs.....	2,000	Public School Journal.....	3,000	Wetly & Sterling.....	1,800
Christian Science Reading Room.....	700	Hall, Homer.....	2,000	Phillips, J. C.....	14,000	White, W. R.....	500
Collins, L. H.....	500	Hill, J. R.....	750	Peter, R. P. (cable law lib).....	1,500	Wagner, H. C.....	150
Durley block.....	50,000	Hibb, O. (bldg).....	50,000	Postoffice.....	800	Young & Potter.....	1,000
Donnelly, E. E.....	300	Hendry, Squire.....	1,500	Parritt, F. T.....	15,000	Zick, A.....	700
Denton, J. W.....	2,500	Hudson, Burr & Co (bldg).....	5,000	Pillsbury, Arthur.....	600	Other losses, not enumerated.....	250,000
Duff, A. M.....	400					Total.....	\$2,001,094
DeNange, A.....	2,000						
Electric Light Co.....	4,000						



1. Toward the Court House from corner Main and Monroe.
2. Toward the B. S. Green and Model Laundry buildings, where the fire started.
3. Birdseye view south, from corner Main and Monroe.
4. From corner Main and Jefferson, looking northeast.



Before the fire. Looking north from the Court House dome.



Before the fire. East side of square. Everything shown in this picture completely wiped out.



1. To the south from North Main street.
2. From the Bulletin corner toward the northwest.
3. Corner Center and Jefferson, looking toward the Phoenix Hotel.
4. North Main street, toward the Court House.

1. The Windsor Hotel corner.



2. From Livingston Flats toward the Court House.



3. Remains of the Griesheim Building.



4. From the Bulletin office.



5. North side square.





1. Looking toward State National Bank.

2. From the Withers Library, looking west.



3. Walls of the Windsor Building.



4. Looking south on west side of Main street from Monroe.

5. Looking south on east side of Main street from Monroe.

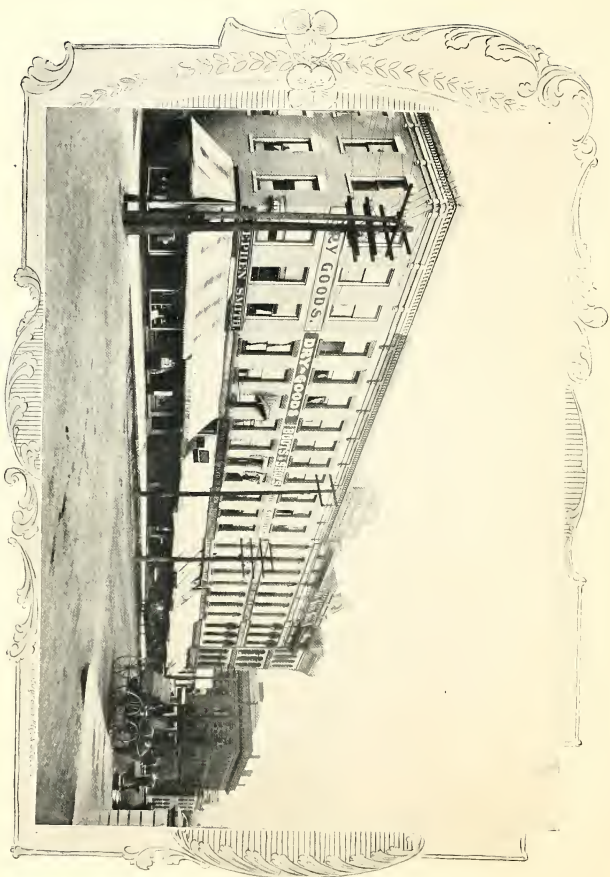


South side of square. This side of square not burned.

U. S. A.
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Before the fire. Looking southeast from the Court House dome.



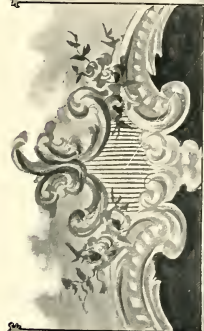
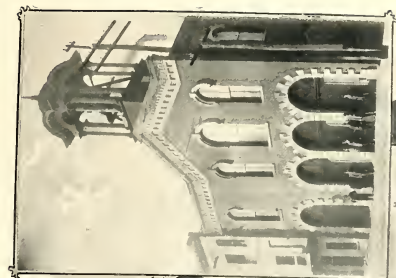
Before the fire, North side of square. Everything shown in this picture completely wiped out.



1. Looking south on Main street from George Brand & Co.
2. The Court House after the fire.
3. Looking north on Main from corner Main and Washington.
4. Looking toward the north from Court House yard.



Before the fire. West side of Court House square. The first three buildings on the right totally destroyed, the fourth one partially.



Bloomington Fire Department and their homes

